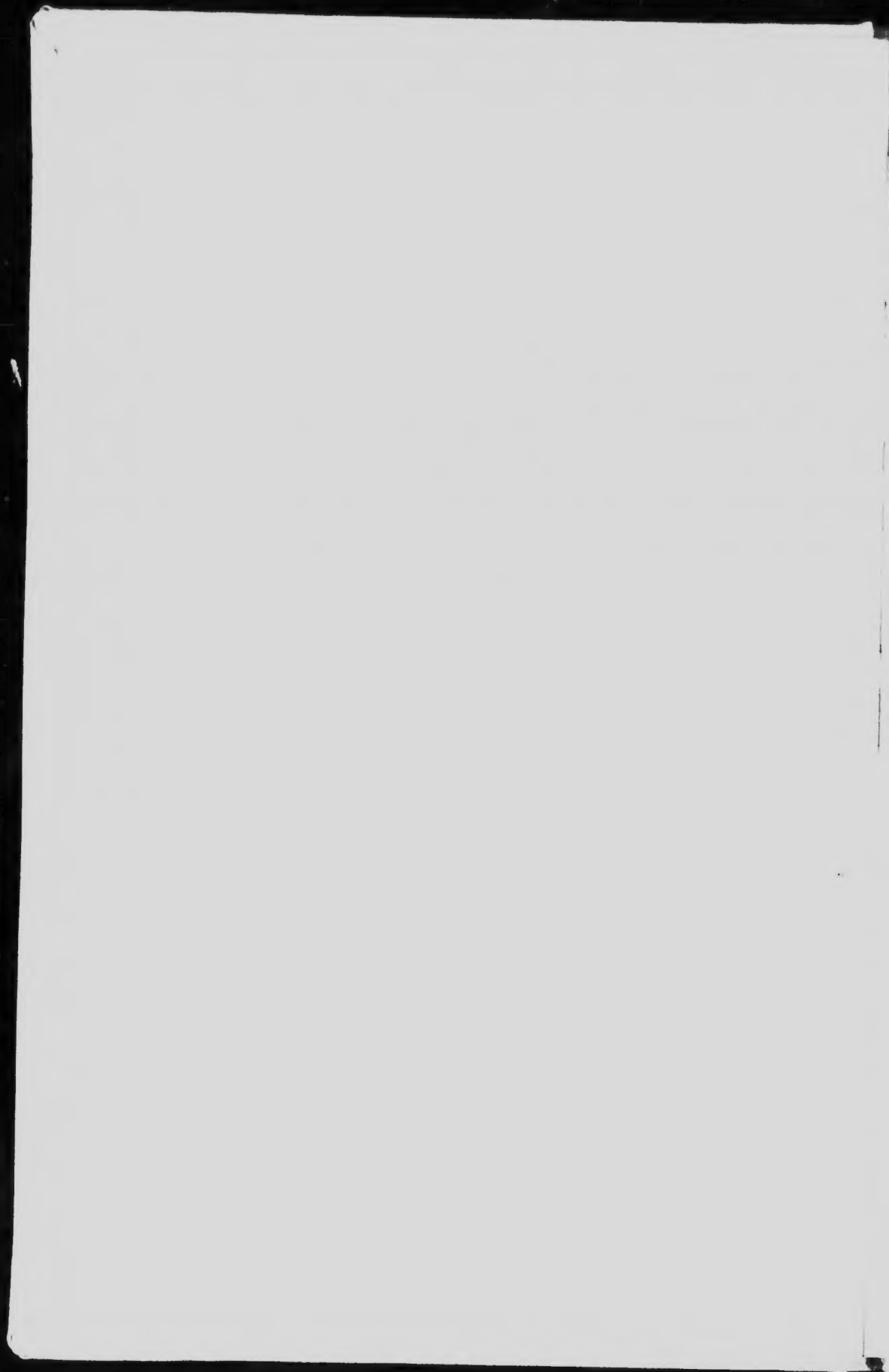




The proposed Wolfe Memorial Church in Quebec

When a little local pilot sees a great ship steering straight for the rocks at the entrance to his own home port he is in honour bound to warn her of her danger, no matter whether he is asked or not. So when I saw Canon Scott and his supporters shaping a course which must lead them to disaster I tried to warn them by a letter to *The Guardian* in England. But as the only answer was the order to go full speed ahead on the same course I now make one more effort, by repeating here, in a slightly revised form, the letter I have just sent for publication in *The Canadian Churchman*.

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Wednesday, 10 December, 1913.

I am afraid that the "corrective" letters from the Revd. A. R. Kelley and the Bishop of Kingston call for "corrective" replies. But lest replies to special points might entail further misunderstanding I shall try to explain the whole case in a few words. First, however, let me say, most emphatically, that I simply oppose the untoward form the scheme is taking, and not either Canon Scott or the idea of building a memorial to Wolfe.

A generous owner offered a beautiful site. Canon Scott conceived the idea of building a Wolfe Memorial Church on it. The Bishop of Quebec approved. Canon Scott at once issued an appeal in Canada. He then went to England, where the approval of his own diocesan naturally induced the Archbishops to express their good will. Some English papers referred sympathetically to the idea of building a Wolfe Memorial Church "on the Battlefield of Quebec." And there seemed to be nothing left to say except "well done!"

But objections have been growing since the start. Many people within the Church of England ask whether this "national" venture is to be moderate or extreme, and whether a church is really needed there as a place of worship or simply wanted as a show place for state occasions. Many outside the Anglican communion ask how Wolfe's Presbyterians and Roman Catholics are to be commemorated. And many more, both within and without, ask why a Wolfe Memorial should be a church at all, seeing that Wolfe's fame was won in war, not in religion, and that his army included men of several different forms of faith. Explanation, compromise and change might possibly meet these objections; or possibly not. I do not presume to offer an opinion.

But no explanation, no compromise, and no change can possibly meet the fatal objection to the present site. No one objects to an ordinary church there; and no one questions the legal right to build the memorial on what is private property. But those who know the history and, still more, the living significance of this particular spot do object to a Wolfe Memorial Church which is not to be on Wolfe's own "Battlefield of Quebec" at all, or even on neutral ground, but right in the very centre of the totally different battlefield of Ste Foy. Both fields are within the several thousand acres once called the Plains of Abraham. But the whole of what is now called the Plains separates them on one flank, while the thirteen hundred yards between de Salaberry Street and the Avenue des Braves separate them on the other, as well as in the centre. It is true that there is this single point of similarity to link one battle with the other: — both armies in both battles were practically the same. But such a similarity in armies only accentuates the dissimilarity of results and the consequent unsuitability of the site which Canon Scott has so misunderstandingly chosen. For Wolfe's old army, victorious at the Battle of the Plains in 1759, was defeated by Montcalm's old army at the Battle of Ste Foy in 1760; and the very spot now chosen for the Wolfe Memorial is exactly where the issue of Ste Foy was decided, when the British battery that stood upon this dominating crest was taken at the point of triumphant French bayonets.

These are the facts. But unfortunately the story of Ste Foy is very little known, except to French-Canadians. English-speaking people know the chapter of the Plains by heart. But how many of

them heed what they suppose to be the mere footnote of Ste Foy? Yet Ste Foy has a chapter of its own and, what is more, a message of living significance as well. Might I take the liberty of supposing that Canon Scott, the Bishop of Kingston and Mr Kelley have forgotten this chapter and consequently ignored the seven factors of living significance which the message contains today?

The first of these seven factors is the sentiment of race. Of course we are all what the Bishop calls "citizens of the same Empire" now; and it is well for the French-Canadians that they do own allegiance to the Crown which guarantees their race peculiarities. But very different parts make up the whole. Each race takes justifiable pride in its own ancestral prowess. The French-Canadians have long memories. Their Provincial motto is *Je me souviens*. And they have often been reminded of the glories of Ste Foy, especially of recent years. Thus there is every reason why they should resent the intrusion of a perverting memorial which rightly belongs to quite a different field. And is there any reason why we Anglo-Canadians should not sympathise with them? I would go further, and ask if there is any reason why our sympathy should not be fittingly expressed by Canon Scott and his supporters, who so evidently admire a hero when they see one that they are just the men to do appropriate honour to the heroes of Ste Foy, by withdrawing a proposal made in perfect innocence and under an equally perfect misapprehension? Nor is this the only argument. There is a higher one again, one that appeals to all Canadians, of whichever race they are. For, rightly considered, the glory of one race is the glory of both. The honour of our own ancestral heroes is heightened in victory and saved in defeat by the fact that their historic opponents, the heroes of New France, were themselves repeatedly victorious, especially when led by Montcalm. And now that both Canadian races are subjects of the same King, surely we should all rejoice to find that each was once a foeman worthy of the other's steel.

The second factor of living significance in the field of Ste Foy is the work of the historian Garneau, who revived its memory most effectively two generations ago, and whose own memory was revived only last year, when his statue was unveiled amid universal applause. The third factor is the centenary of Ste Foy, when an

Imperial British guard of honour was present at the unveiling of the monument "Aux Braves" who won the day for France. The fourth factor is the recent progress of exact historical research, which has undoubtedly tended to raise the worth of the French armies in expert estimation. The fifth factor is the Tercentenary of Quebec in 1908, at which the most moving sight of all was the march past of the different historic armies, side by side. Every one who was then behind the scenes knows perfectly well that this crowning and indispensable feature could not have been introduced, under any circumstances, unless there had been a full and frank recognition of the meaning of Ste Foy. The sixth factor is the wreath which his present Majesty laid at the foot of the Monument aux Braves, on behalf of King Edward VII, as a visible pledge of the *Entente cordiale d'honneur* so happily established between both races with regard to their respective heroes. This graceful act of homage was as gracefully returned two years ago, when the delegates who came out from France for the unveiling of the Montcalm monument in Quebec laid a memorial wreath at the foot of the column which bears the famous legend :

Here died Wolfe victorious.

Finally, the seventh factor of living significance is the new Avenue des Braves, which has just been completed by the National Battlefields Commission, on purpose to mark the ground where French and French-Canadians retrieved the honour of their arms.



